

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended and claim 28 has been canceled. Claims 1, 3, 7-15, 17-19, 21-27, 29 and 30 are currently pending in the case. Further examination and reconsideration of the presently claimed application is respectfully requested.

Allowed Claims

Applicant acknowledges and appreciates the Examiner's allowance of claims 13-15, 17-19 and 21-27.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7, 10-12 and 28-30 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but were deemed allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant sincerely appreciates the Examiner's recognition of the patentable subject matter recited in these claims. To expedite prosecution, claim 28 has been canceled and its limitations have been incorporated into base claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Removal of the objection to claims 7, 10-12 and 28-30 is respectfully requested.

Section 102 Rejection

Claims 1, 3, 8, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,999,339 to Tuttle et al. As noted above, claims 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowed limitations of claim 28. Accordingly, independent claim 1 and dependent claims 3, 8 and 9 are in condition for allowance. Removal of the rejection of § 102(e) claims 1, 3, 8 and 9 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

This response constitutes a complete response to all of the issues raised in the Office Action mailed December 22, 2006. In view of the amendments and remarks herein, Applicants assert that pending claims 1, 3, 7-15, 17-19, 21-27, 29 and 30 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions, comments, or suggestions, the undersigned earnestly requests a telephone conference.

No fees are required for filing this amendment; however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees, which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Daffer McDaniel LLP Deposit Account No. 50-3268.

Respectfully submitted,
/Kevin L. Daffer/
Kevin L. Daffer
Reg. No. 34,146
Attorney for Applicants

Customer No. 35617
Date: March 21, 2007
MEL